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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 000238

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 1/17/2016

TAGS: [PTER](#) [KCRM](#) [PGOV](#) [BG](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: JMB BOMBER SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS

Classified By: A/DCM: D.C. McCullough, Reason(s): 1.4 (b)

1. (SBU) On January 15, the Kishoreganj town court, located 100 kilometers north of Dhaka, sentenced Jamaatul Mujahedin Bangladesh (JMB) regional commander Obaidullah Sumon, aged 25, to 15 years of "rigorous imprisonment" and fined him 2,000 taka (50 USD) for possession of four kilos of gunpowder, 12 gelatin-based explosive charges, and 50 detonators. On September 14, villagers had captured Sumon carrying the explosives and handed him over to police. Sumon confessed to police that he had placed a bomb at a bus stop in Kishoreganj on August 17 as part of the 500 nearly simultaneous mini-bombs set off that day that killed two people and wounded 100 throughout Bangladesh.

2. (SBU) In response to the August 17 and subsequent JMB attacks, the government arrested 800 suspects. Sumon, however, is the suspect to be tried, convicted, and sentenced for his role in the JMB campaign of violence.

3. (C) BNP MP Ziaur Rahman Khan told us that the 15-year sentence might deter future JMB attackers, but to really to be effective "we should target the ring leaders." He cited Sumon's sentence as "overboard" for the actual crime committed and an example of the judiciary bowing to societal and political pressures to demonstrate "toughness." He opined that "at least half" of the 800 suspects may not be guilty of anything and that many of the others have only a loose connection to JMB.

CHAMMAS